

REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF PUBLICATION

TO THE

LUTHERAN

PUBLICATION SOCIETY,

READ AT A MEETING HELD AT

ALTOONA, PA., JUNE, 1881.

TO WHICH IS APPENDED THE

ADDRESS OF

Rev. M. RHODES, D. D.,

DELIVERED ON THE EVENING OF THE

ANNIVERSARY OF THE SOCIETY.

PUBLISHED FOR GRATUITOUS CIRCULATION.

PHILADELPHIA:
LUTHERAN PUBLICATION HOUSE,
1881.

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OF THE
LUTHERAN PUBLICATION SOCIETY.

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Secretary of Finance Committee.
THEOPHILUS H. SMITH.

REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF PUBLICATION.

THE present Bienennial Report to the Lutheran Publication Society is rendered by your Board with a sense of much reason for gratitude to God. Two years ago, when the last Report was laid before you, it was thought that a crisis had been passed, and that the hope of a brighter day might be reasonably indulged. Since we last appeared before you, the Society's quarter-centenary period was reached and passed. Although allowed to come and go in silence, let it even yet be referred to, after the lapse of a year, for the sake of record, as having marked an epoch of encouragement. Had it at first been foreseen that the labor and anxiety of a quarter of a century would be needed to reach the present position, perhaps not a few hearts would have failed them for fear. But there is in this history an illustration of that highest wisdom which veils the end from the beginning. The result is well worth the cost. Even in education and discipline, its value cannot be estimated; for it has not a little aided in teaching and training the Church to plan and execute great things.

REFERENCE TO LAST REPORT.

We may be permitted to refer you to the final paragraph in the body of the last Report: "Here the Board will for the present pause, rearing, with gratitude and praise, an 'Ebenezer,' saying, 'Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.' Sincere thanks are returned

to the Society for its marked confidence in its appointees. You have had not a few men in the Board who for weary years have borne the burden and the heat of the day; aye, who manfully struggled, and labored, and suffered, when it was not day, but dark night. Yet quietly and faithfully they strove to do their duty to God and the Church, through times of great business distraction, through seasons of much misunderstanding and misrepresentation. At last, they believe that the Lord is already affording them a portion of their reward. They see at least some light breaking through the clouds. They hail with gladness the presence of hope that is cheering them onward. They thank God and take courage."

FORESHADOWING THE PRESENT CONDITION.

It is a matter of no small degree of satisfaction to the Board—and doubtless must prove the same to the entire Society—that the hope then invited and welcomed has not misled us. Never before have your Board had the privilege of presenting so cheering an aspect of their trust as at this time. Whether you look at the building or the work done therein—whether you look at the profits or the application made of the same—the effect is more stimulating than has been any hitherto experienced. The present management, as carried out under the superintendency of Mr. Henry S. Boner, gives still greater hope to the Church for the time to come.

FINANCIAL CONDITION.

The following tabular statements, audited by the proper committee, present a clear and comprehensive view to the date of March 31st, 1881, the end of the business year.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT.

To the President and Members of the Lutheran Board of Publication.

BRETHREN: It is with feelings of gratitude to Almighty God, thankfulness to the Church at large, congratulation to the Board, and satisfaction to himself, that the Superintendent of the Lutheran Publication House is enabled to make the following exhibit, showing the Board to be free of debt, and the business of the House in a flourishing and prosperous condition.

So that it may be seen at a glance, by comparison,

HOW THE BUSINESS HAS GROWN,

I append "exhibits" in detail, as made March 31, 1879, and March 31, 1880, with the one for the year ending March 31, 1881.

Financial Exhibit for Nine Months, ending March 31, 1879.

<i>Assets.</i>	<i>Amount.</i>	<i>Liabilities.</i>	<i>Amount.</i>
Merchandise	\$19,740 68	Mortgage on real estate..	\$10,000 00
Stereotype plates.....	5,620 12	*Amount due subscribers	
Store fixtures.....	987 82	in subscriptions to peri-	
Bills receivable.....	148 86	odicals	4,007 13
Book accounts (good)....	6,068 48	<u>NET ASSETS (to balance).</u>	33,239 21
Cash in bank and safe....	3,284 54		
Real estate (cost).....	11,395 84		
	<u>\$47,246 34</u>		<u>\$47,246 34</u>

*The item of \$4,007.13 due subscribers in subscriptions, is the amount paid in advance for periodicals published by the House.

Amount of sales for nine months ending March 31, 1879..... \$22,033 10
Amount of Old Ledger Accounts collected from July 1, 1878, to
March 31, 1879..... 4,920 75

Financial Exhibit for the Year ending March 31, 1880.

<i>Assets.</i>	<i>Amount.</i>	<i>Liabilities.</i>	<i>Amount.</i>
Merchandise	\$19,083 22	Mortgage on real estate...	\$7,500 00
Stereotype plates.....	4,842 12	*Amount due subscribers	
Store fixtures.....	1,304 38	in subscriptions to peri-	
Bills receivable.....	126 90	odicals (cost)....	2,385 64
Book accounts (good)....	7,589 08	<u>NET ASSETS (to balance)..</u>	39,655 70
Cash in bank and safe....	3,212 38		
Real estate (cost).....	13,383 26		
	<u>\$49,541 34</u>		<u>\$49,541 34</u>

*The item of \$2,385.64 is cost to supply periodicals published by the House, and paid for in advance by subscribers.

Amount of sales for the year ending March 31, 1880. \$35,440 63
Amount of Old Ledger Accounts collected for the year
ending March 31, 1880..... \$1,158 71
Paid for old notes to Seminary, etc., on old Ledger
Account 564 48
594 23

Financial Exhibit for the Year ending March 31, 1881.

<i>Assets.</i>	<i>Amount.</i>	<i>Liabilities.</i>	<i>Amount.</i>
Merchandise	\$19,649 37	*Amount due subscribers	
Stereotype plates.....	4,790 88	in subscriptions to peri-	
Store fixtures.....	1,306 63	odicals (cost).....	\$2,416 87
Book accounts (good)....	9,799 69	<u>NET ASSETS (to balance).</u>	47,751 24
Cash in bank and safe....	1,228 88		
Real estate (cost).....	13,392 66		
	<u>\$50,168 11</u>		<u>\$50,168 11</u>

*The item of \$2,416.87 is cost to supply periodicals published by the House, and paid for in advance by subscribers.

Amount of sales for the year ending March 31, 1881.....	\$41,133 84	
Amount of old Ledger Accounts collected for the year ending March 31, 1881.....	\$649 00	
Amount paid out on old Ledger Accounts.....	30 82	
		618 18

Number of Periodicals Ordered to be Made for May, 1881.

Lutheran Sunday-School Herald.....	36,000
Augsburg Teacher.....	5,500
Augsburg Lesson Book.....	21,500
Junior Lesson Book	7,000
Augsburg Lesson Leaf.....	16,000
Junior Lesson Leaf.....	7,000
The Little Ones.....	8,000
Total for the month.....	101,000

The other two having been audited in former years, the "Exhibit" for the year ending March 31, 1881, is most respectfully submitted for audit at this time.

HENRY S. BONER, *Superintendent.*

AUDITING COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

PHILADELPHIA, May 10th, 1881.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF PUBLICATION.

Brethren: Your committee to audit the accounts of the Lutheran Publication House for the year ending March 31st, 1881, report that they have attended to the duty assigned them, and found said accounts to correspond in all respects with the statements made in the accompanying annual exhibit of the Superintendent. In making the necessary examination, your committee was pleased to notice the neat and accurate manner in which all the books of the House have been kept.

In the exhibit submitted to your committee, several items occur which may require some explanation in order to a proper understanding. It will be seen that the stereotype plates for the previous year were valued at \$4842.12. According to a rule adopted and practiced by the House, one-tenth of the original cost is to be deducted annually from the value of these plates. This would make them worth this year only \$3665.07. In consequence, however, of new plates having been purchased during the year to the amount of \$1125.81, the value of the stereotype plates on hand, notwithstanding the ten per cent. reduction, is but little less than the year before. The effect of this annual reduction in decreasing the profits of the House is apparent to all. It will likewise be perceived that the book accounts for the year ending March 31st, 1881, are larger by over \$2200 than those of the previous year. This, at first, appears to indicate a smaller proportion of cash business than before. Such, however, is not the case. The increase referred to was caused by the fact that a very large number of copies of the Book of Worship with Tunes was sent out to fill orders, so near the close of the business year that payments for the same could not be received in time to appear in this year's report.

The sales during the year but recently closed, amounted to \$41,133.84, an increase of \$5693.21 over the amount of the preceding year.

In the net assets we also notice a gain of \$8095.54, a showing highly satisfactory to all who rejoice in the prosperity of the Publication House.

In the report of the Auditing Committee for 1879, the statement is made that "the House is out of debt with the exception of a \$10,000 mortgage, and the hope is expressed that this may be paid by bequests and donations to the Society." This hope we are happy to state has at length been realized, in so far as the payment of the mortgage is concerned, though not by gifts and legacies. Out of the profits of the business of the House, however, the entire indebtedness of the Publication Society has been cancelled, and for the first time in its history this organization "owes no man anything." Besides this, we notice an increase in the book account of \$2210.61, and a cash balance in bank of \$1228.88.

These facts show the business of the House to be in a condition that is exceedingly gratifying and encouraging. This happy state of things, under the blessing of God, we believe to be due to the confidence and generous patronage of the church at large, and especially also to the interest, activity, and competence of your Superintendent.

From the experience and results of the past year, it is very evident to your committee that, with proper efforts on the part of pastors, school superintendents, and church members generally, the business of your House can be steadily and greatly increased from year to year, and your Board be enabled to prosecute the work of publication with greater energy and still better results, and at the same time contribute largely to the support of missions and the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom.

Respectfully submitted,

(Signed,)

E. HUBER,
C. S. WEISER,
B. S. KUNKEL,
Auditing Committee.

TREASURER'S REPORT.

M. Buehler, in Account with Lutheran Publication Society, 42 N. Ninth St. Philadelphia.

1879.

DR.

April,	To this amount balance as per Account to April	
	1, 1879	\$92 57
April,	To error in bill July 1, 1876.....	1 00
April 22,	" Cash, Rent from Miss Thomas	70 00
" " "	" " " " H. S. Boner, Supt.....	20 00
May 31,	" " from Rev. H. S. Cook, annual due.....	1 00
June 21,	" " Rent from Miss Thomas.....	70 00
June 21,	" " " " H. S. Boner, Supt.....	20 00
July 16,	" " from Chas. Schieren, Life Member.....	10 00
" " "	" " " A. Gebhart, " "	10 00

July 16,	To cash from Rev. J. C. Brodfuhrer, Contr. Mem.	1 00
"	" " " " J. F. Reinmund, D.D., " "	1 00
"	" " " " C. S. Albert, Contr. Mem.	1 00
"	" " " " O. F. Waage, " "	1 00
"	" " " " E. Huber, " "	1 00
"	" " " " S. B. Barnitz, " "	1 00
"	" " " " E. V. Richards, Contr. Member.	\$1 00
"	" " " " Jos. Stulb, " "	1 00
"	" " " " S. F. Stadelman, " "	1 00
"	" " " " C. S. Weiser, " "	1 00
"	" " " " G. W. Patton, " "	1 00
"	" " " " Theo. H. Smith, " "	1 00
Aug. 9,	" " " Allegheny Synod.	44 75
Aug. 20,	" " " Rev. J. H. Menges, Contr. Member.	1 00
Aug. 26,	" " " West Penna. Synod.	15 05
Sept. 12,	" " " East Penna. Synod.	31 17
Oct. 1,	" " Rent from Miss Thomas.	70 00
"	" " " " H. S. Boner, Supt.	30 00
"	" " " from Maryland Synod.	5 98
Oct. 11,	" " " East Ohio "	7 00
Dec. 5,	" " Rent from Miss Thomas.	105 00
1880.		
Jan. 9,	" " from Miami Synod.	4 00
Feb. 17,	" " " Rev. Prof. Baugher, Contr. Member.	1 00
Mar. 3,	" " Rent from Miss Thomas.	105 00
		————— \$726 52

1879.

CONTRA, CR.

April,	By Cash paid Water Rent.	\$11 00
June 15,	" " " 6 mos. Int. on Bond and Mort.	300 00
Aug. 4,	" " " Rev. M. W. Hamma, D. D., for Expenses at Wooster.	29 75
Dec. 15,	" " " 6 mos. Int. on Bond and Mort.	300 00
1880.		
Jan.,	" " " for Repairs.	2 50
Feb. 17,	" " " Fire Ass'n. of Phila. on additional Insurance of \$1000 at 2½%	25 00
"	" " " Resurveying on the same.	1 00
April 20,	" " " Water Rent.	11 00
		————— 680 25
	Balance in hand.	\$46 27

Examined and found correct,

(Signed)

THEOPHILUS H. SMITH,

Secretary of the Finance Committee.

G. W. Patton, in Account with Lutheran Publication Society, 42 N. Ninth St., Philadelphia.

1880.	DR.	
July 20,	To Cash, Rent from Miss Thomas.....	\$140 00
Sept. 5,	“ “ from West Penna. Synod.....	9 81
	“ “ “ East “ “	20 98
Nov. 9,	“ “ “ S. F. Stadelman, T. H. Smith, Rev. E. Huber, and Rev. T. C. Pritchard, each \$1, Contr. Members...	4 00
	“ “ “ B. S. Kunkel, Life Member.....	10 00
	“ “ Rent from Miss Thomas.....	105 00
Nov. 22,	“ “ Bal. from estate of M. Buehler, late Treas.	46 27
	“ “ from Rev. W. H. Dunbar, Rev. J. H. Menges, Rev. A. Hiller, C. S. Weiser, and T. J. Kuch, each \$1, Contr. Members.....	5 00
1881.		
Jan. 8,	To Cash from Miami Synod, Ohio.....	\$2 00
Jan. 18,	“ “ Rent from Miss Thomas.....	105 00
Mar. 14,	“ “ from E. V. Richards, Contr. Member....	1 00
	“ “ “ J. T. Monroe, “ “	2 00
Mar. 30,	“ “ “ Mrs. Charlotte P. Hower, Life Mem.	10 00
	“ “ Rent from Miss Thomas.....	70 00
		\$531 06
1880.	CONTRA, CR.	
Nov. 9,	By Cash paid Tax for 1879	\$218 38
1881.		
Mar. 30,	“ “ “ “ “ 1880.....	213 00
	“ “ “ Water Rent.....	22 00
		453 38
	Balance in hand.....	\$77 68

Examined and found correct,
(Signed)

JOHN T. MONROE,
Member of Finance Committee.

RENOVATION OF THE STOREHOUSE.

It is worthy of special notice that directly after the return of the Board from the Society, two years ago, measures were taken to extend and renovate the store-room. A large addition was made to the size of the apartment in the rear, making the depth sixty-eight feet. Thus, ample conveniences have been secured for the accommodation of clerks' desks, storing space for new publications, and

facilities for respectively packing and unpacking shipments and invoices. The front portion of the room, affording commodious space, was re-shelved, and neatly adapted to all the wants of the sales-business, while additional light was introduced and the walls and ceiling of the whole room were tastefully decorated. Beyond this, the exterior of the front was rendered more prominent and inviting by improved bulk-window, heavy doors, judicious painting and lettering, and substantial and attractive awning and pavement. By careful management, the whole improvement was effected at the moderate cost of \$2,315.63. Another feature of this enterprise well worthy of being borne in mind, is the fact that when the work was completed the entire cost was promptly paid.

THE MORTGAGE CANCELLED.

For a long period, as your Board at intervals came before you, reference had to be made to an oppressive mortgage on the real estate of the Society. For some years this burden had been restricted to \$6,000. Then came a time when it was rapidly run up to \$10,000. The statement of this latter amount continued to be repeated to you for some years. But to-day we come with the news that the whole of this mortgage has been paid within the last two years. This is the first time since the purchase of the House, twenty-two years ago, that it could be reported that you were *out of debt*. This position secured, there is no longer the need of dreading the old incumbrance, nor of annually expending hundreds of dollars of hard-earned money to meet the demands of interest.

PUBLICATIONS.

NEW WORKS.

Within the last two years the following new issues have appeared:

1. The Groundwork of a System of Evangelical Lutheran Theology. By Prof. Samuel Sprecher, D. D., LL.D. The size of the volume is octavo, 502 pages.
2. Hallische Nachrichten ; or, a History of the Planting of the Lutheran Church in America. Translated from the German by Rev. J. Oswald, D. D. Two volumes of the series are thus far published. 16mo., 356 and 465 pages.
3. The Journeys of Luther, and their Important Relation to the

Work of the Reformation. By John G. Morris, D. D., LL.D. 16mo., 425 pages.

4. Life Thoughts for Young Men. By M. Rhodes, D. D. 12mo., 340 pages. A second edition has already been printed.

5. Memorial of Rev. David Loy Tressler, Ph. D., late President of Carthage College. Prepared by Rev. M. Rhodes, D. D. 8vo., 107 pages.

6. Recognition in Heaven. By Rev. M. Rhodes, D. D. 18mo., 132 pages. Of this work also the second edition is now selling.

7. The Parsonage of Libenau. Translated from the German of Franz Hoffmann by Rev. Charles A. Smith, D. D. This is the 38th volume of the Fatherland Series. 18mo., 222 pages.

8. Bertha's Coronet; or, The House on the Heights. By Miss Harriet B. McKeever. 18mo., 438 pages.

9. The Book of Worship with Tunes. 12mo., 559 pages. The tenth thousand is now being served to patrons.

10. The Liturgy of the General Synod. 16mo., 260 pages.

11. Formula of Government and Discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. 18mo., 35 pages; in paper.

12. A Christian Home. By Rev. M. Rhodes, D. D. 16mo., 27 pages; paper.

13. The Grace of Giving. By Rev. M. Rhodes, D. D. 16mo., 36 pages; paper.

14. Semi-Centennial of the Augsburg Confession; A Discourse by Rev. H. C. Haithcox. 18mo., 16 pages. Published for the author, by request.

15. The Wine Miracle. By Rev. J. F. Diener. 47 pages; in paper. Published for the author.

16. Memorial Volume, to Commemorate the Semi-Centennial Anniversary of the Hartwick Synod. Prepared by Rev. P. A. Strobel. 12mo., 430 pages.

The foregoing publications present a very respectable bulk of reading matter, aggregating 4,400 pages, issued within the interval of two years; to which may be added new editions of the Book of Worship (Hymns only) printed to the extent of five thousand copies of each of the two sizes.

PERIODICALS.

The periodicals are all in a prospering condition. Both the HERALD and TEACHER, as will be seen by comparison with last report, have maintained their circulation, although other publications initiated by the Board have in some degree shared their patronage. The LESSON BOOK and the JUNIOR LESSON BOOK have unitedly a larger circulation than the former had at last reporting. The aggregate issue of seven periodicals has now reached one hundred and one thousand copies per month.

With the beginning of the present year, the AUGSBURG JUNIOR LESSON BOOK, under the editorship of Rev. H. L. Baugher, D. D., was introduced.

THE LITTLE ONES, a monthly paper adapted to the smaller children, was begun in July of last year, and is edited by Rev. S. B. Barnitz.

THE ALMANAC AND YEAR-BOOK, thus far sent out by the Board for the third time, was much enlarged and improved in the number for the present year. Yet the price has not been advanced. Ten thousand copies were printed of the issue for 1881.

TRANSIENT PRINTING.

An increasing proportion of the transient printing within the Church is coming to the Board. The Minutes of the General Synod have been issued there during the last ten years. In 1880, all but three Synods within the General Synod, also the General Synod in the South, and the Synod of Virginia (aggregating more than a thousand pages of printing), had their Minutes sent forth with your imprint.

MANUSCRIPTS.

The manuscripts of several new books are now in hand, and may soon be expected to appear. Among these may be named

1. Luther at the Wartburg, and
2. Luther at Coburg. These are both by Rev. Dr. J. G. Morris.
3. A Haughty Spirit. Translated from the German of Franz Hoffman, by Miss Emma L. Parry.

CASH SYSTEM.

Efforts are put forth to reduce the entire business as nearly as possible to a cash system. The periodicals are now wholly con-

ducted on the principle of cash invariably in advance, or of individual responsibility. Although this mode of transacting business may sometimes cause a little inconvenience to patrons, they will unite with us in commending it, in view of the *greater convenience* resulting to those conducting the business, and of the vastly compensating satisfaction in the greater safety and success thus secured to this Institution of the Church.

LOCAL RETAIL BUSINESS.

This department of the business, which during a series of years was almost wholly lost, is still improving, and may be expected, with proper management, to continue increasing from year to year.

THE FUTURE.

While the affairs of the Board are thus represented to you as being in a better condition than ever heretofore, it will not be forgotten that this stage has been reached by unwearied oversight, labor and economy. Nor must it for a moment be supposed that any of these requisites to success can be with safety relaxed for the future. With the favor of the Lord upon the continued activity and vigilance of the Board and all co-operating agencies, may we hope for still increasingly favorable reports for the years to come. And to this end let us all devoutly pray.

DEATH OF MEMBERS.

We deem it yet an appropriate item of record that, in less than one year after the meeting of the Society held at Wooster, Ohio, in June, 1879, three esteemed members of the Board then elected were called away from their earthly labors—Hon. Charles Kugler, Mr. Martin Buehler, and Rev Dr. J. F. Reinmund. The first had served in the Board seventeen years; the second, about eighteen years; and the last was a member less than one year. The first was the President of this Society for fifteen consecutive years, up to the time of your last meeting; the second served the Board about the same length of time as Treasurer; the third, though only a short time a fellow-laborer in this particular sphere, gave much promise of good service by his mature judgment and zealous activity. They have gone to their eternal reward; and their brethren who remain in the Master's service upon the earth, remembering

their labors and counsel, will still try to profit by their example of sincerity and fidelity. The Lord incline us all to heed more truly the lesson that the work is great though the time is short!

By order of the Board, respectfully submitted,

M. SHEELEIGH,
Corresponding Secretary.

Altoona, Pa., June 13, 1881.

Attest : W. M. BAUM,
GEO. W. PATTON,
JOHN T. MONROE,
L. E. ALBERT,
THEOPH. H. SMITH,
Finance Committee.

THE POWER AND FUNCTION OF THE CHRISTIAN PRESS:

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE LUTHERAN PUBLICATION SOCIETY
AT THE MEETING OF THE GENERAL SYNOD, CONVENED AT
ALTOONA, PA., JUNE, 1881.

BY REV. M. RHODES, D. D.

THERE is a thrilling interest in observing the march of God in the events of providence, and much profit in noting the relation of these to the establishment and progress of his kingdom.

As the ages have come and mankind has advanced toward the final ripening, God, by means of civil commotion, increase of knowledge, invention, and numerous other agencies, has but anticipated the growing wants and the upward growth of men, and the enlarged mission of the Church; in other words, every age has been made to contribute to the fulfillment of the divine purpose, and this manifest sovereignty over all will continue until he for whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things, shall be owned universal Lord and King.

In this great sweep of power it is remarkable to observe how God has employed with marked results seemingly insignificant agencies. He has laid his hands on the material, and, sweeping along in a range of thought far above the materialist, and reaching out the sceptre of a will whose supremacy has been hidden from the infidel philosopher while it employed him in having its own way, God has wrought amazingly, and history has become an unanswerable testimony to the divinity and function of the truth.

Among these forces which, from time to time, have burst upon the world, and wrought so efficiently in the divine plan, there is perhaps none more marked in its results, or more promising in the future, than the discovery and enlargement of the printing art. The power of the press is unquestioned, if not unlimited. Neither was it a thing of chance, nor a mere product of genius, that gave to mankind this mighty agent of human progress. Its discovery, as well as its enlargement of scope and facility, were events in the order of providential movement. It is much in favor of this wonderful force that its origin may be so distinctly traced to a progress in which the divine purpose is so clearly indicated. It is not without significance that the crown of the great discovery was a Bible—the first book published. God has given this mighty agency to Christian nations as a powerful means of enlightenment and progress in matters of supremest importance. The press, guided by Christian motive, clad with Christian truth, and thrilled with the Christian spirit, is God's own messenger, the herald of his own triumphant approach.

That this agency is appointed to a mission, of a kind in some part doubtless different, but no less real and essential than the Christian ministry, we are quite assured: and that mission is to flood the nations with the knowledge of the Lord, to appeal to and enlighten the surging masses the minister never reaches, to confront and grapple with the enemies of a pure morality and of a true godliness in "serried platoons," whom the minister is compelled to grapple single-handed; to plant vigilant sentinels about the threshold and hearthstone of the home, and to buttress the still wider domain of public weal with numerous and strong defences, where the minister could only furnish the single protection. God has evoked, charged, and sent forth this power to fight his battles and to achieve his conquest, and we are not excusable any more if we mistake its mission. A correct view of the mission and power of the press is wholly essential to such use of it as its great capacity challenges. Dr. Craig said well in his paper before the National Alliance, in St. Louis some time ago: "When we apprehend this providential purpose in the press, and begin to estimate aright its prodigious force, then it is that Christian people, instead of sighing and uttering the language of demoralization over the prostitution of a portion of the press to interests of positive evil, or at least to

the open antagonism of what we believe to be the positive good, rise in their might and declare that this mighty agency shall work out its proper end, shall serve the interests of good government, good morals, healthful education of the mental faculties, and a wide dissemination of a Bible Christianity."

There never was a time, certainly not in the history of our Publication Society, when the design of it was so important, and when in every way it was so entirely worthy the confidence and patronage of the whole Church, as now. Nor was there ever a time when we should think so little of its merely commercial value, and so much of its great opportunity and high and noble mission. The latter, properly apprehended and heartily seconded among us, will insure the largest financial success, and make the institution such a power in all the departments of our church work, as it is capable of becoming, and God designs it should be.

It is high time we exalt the true function and master power of the press, both in the church paper, the periodical journal, and the more elaborate volume of the author's pen, in the consciousness and growth of the church, and in all methods of work; for we have come upon a time of great thoughtfulness, when knowledge is running to and fro in the earth, and when there is a clamor for investigation as if the best foundations were insecure, and when this mighty agency is being fearfully perverted, and turned against the citadel of truth, as all the billows of the deep in the storm rush upon the ship, still waving its banner and making for the harbor.

The right arm of infidelity to-day is the press. Whether by the Gospel perverted and eliminated, or by the unmasked violent attack upon the Nazarene and his loving interposition, it penetrates everywhere quietly as the poisonous miasma of a marshy jungle, and as certainly accomplishes its deadly work. Never free from ridicule and sophistry—for these are its offspring and necessity—it is still true that infidelity has risen into the sphere of thought, and summoned to itself the dignity of scholarship. In much part it is not ignorant of the fact that in the minds of Christian people religion is neither a prejudice nor a superstition, still less a myth, but a mighty conviction, for them based upon the clearest and most satisfactory evidence, confirmed by results which chime with the whole order of rational being; and it now comes with counter argument, and counter logic, and counter results, that seem plausi-

ble to many, and find harmony in the taste and purpose and hopes of the unrenewed; and by its sometimes really fascinating approach, and its countless leaves, it sifts its virus into the homes, into the schools, the counting-rooms, the clubs, the social compact, the very politics of the land, as the dust of the street penetrates every crevice, until all good institutions are menaced.

It must be met on its own ground, and in the use of the very means it has stolen from the providence of God, which it denies.

The religious press is called to-day not only to proclaim the message of the evangelist, but to avow itself as the chief apologetic force in Christendom. By its thousand winged arrows it must beat back the enemy, and voice out the everlasting truth in the shout of its own triumphs. We must remember that we are not now living in the quiet, peaceful days of our childhood; and that so mighty an agency as that of the press must not be treated with indifference, if we would pretend to take our place among the aggressive Christian forces of the day. And it evinces a limited apprehension of present need, both as it respects the errors of the time and the taste of the people, to point to the literature of the past ages as ample: much of it is unquestionably excellent, and will never be surpassed in its specific function, and can and should be appropriated; but much of it is burdened with obsolete terms, and was written for a purpose now quite as obsolete. We owe much to the past, and can never get out of its debt; but the printed page to-day must not have on it the must and mould of a by-gone time, but must glow with the freshness and brightness of the better morning to which we have come. Some writer has said: "What the world wants is not new thought so much, as new modes of expressing the old." The old, worn like ancient coin, should be called in and recast in the mint of sanctified genius, sent out again with the charm and freshness of a more emphatic impress upon it. However it roots itself in the past, each generation must produce its own literature. How would we look in the clothes of our forefathers? The material might be excellent, but the cut and fit would be odd and unseemly. Plunder the vast treasures of thought the great and good of the past have stored away for us much as you will, but bring it out of the antiquated raiment of the past, and clothe it in the dress of the present. The world moves, and we must move with it. In much wise, at least, we fight other giants than those with which the

fathers grappled; or if with the same, the form of attack has changed, and so must the form of defence.

The old implements of war, though grappled by four times the number, would be utterly powerless against a few men now, skilled in the use of the weapons which modern invention has produced.

The same applies to our methods in the mightiest conflict of the ages—the battle between truth and error.

Christianity herself had advantages in the early ages which she has not now, and now she possesses and needs facilities which she had not then, and both of these must be apprehended. Once Christian truth contended with the false and senseless philosophies of Pagan nations. But truth then met a religion resting on a scheme which was fast dying of its own weakness. Christianity was new-born, and went forward with all the freshness and fire of the angel in the Apocalypse, flying through the heavens, having the everlasting Gospel to preach to all nations. But it met a foe which hastened its own death by the strokes it returned—so feeble was it. In the middle ages, when she was herself enfeebled by vain and sensual offenses, Christianity was resisted by superstition and ignorance; but even with her foes there was some recognition of fundamental truth. After a time came the great revolution of the sixteenth century, when the Reformation, championed by Luther, vindicated and restored to the truth the image of God. But even in this mighty movement, when the press did such good service, there was a belief in God, some trust in His providence, and even a recognition of human sin and of a “blood redemption,” as well as a partial appeal to a moral order in the universe, and a sense of a hereafter characterized by penalty and reward. But now, see the disparity! Never was the perversion of the true and beautiful so marked and so efficient as to-day. We have become at least familiar with the term science, and wherefore? She meets us everywhere; young, self-reliant, for the most part respectful, and throbbing with a seeming sincerity and interest that secure her favor in the highest circles. Among her forces and adornments are skill and learning in all the departments that challenge the thought of the time, and in her train what a host! among whom are some of the keenest intellects of the century; and it is idle to say that their trenchant blades are weak as they ring upon the sturdy citadel of truth, and as they rush the conflict upon her

very threshold, sneering at her God as they bow to and deify cold law. They would quench out supernatural revelation, immortality, God himself.

Once varied types of dogma, ecclesiastical order, and church ordinances, supplied the materials for controversy; but it is very different now. The cunning foe has ceased to batter the turrets and towers of the temple, or to be concerned about her gilding and trappings, and is aiming his blows at the foundations. The infidelity of our time is spiritual *Nihilism*.

Its battle-cry is "no God," "no Bible," and consequently "no Christianity." In such a case, Christianity must take the field as a panoplied apologetic; and the mighty agency of the press, which belongs to her by divine right, must become the dominant apologetic force in Christendom. The religious weekly and periodical must be scattered far and wide, and the whole church must be startled from her indifference respecting the importance and power of these—the book, the tract, the leaflet, all charged with wholesome truth, and radiant as the face of God with the light of his love, must be circulated at the lowest price and by every possible means. Every religious paper that comes into the home, every good book and tract published, bought and read, is an angel of God sent forth, and in its silent ministry will accomplish untold good. Our Publication Society has now an opportunity which may not have seemed so essential in the former time, nor were there ever in its history such facilities for responding to it. We have much in a noble church order and in a glorious faith to look after; but we have more. The world is lost, and in more part than we think it is hungering for the gospel. No denomination can afford to wear out its pens and exhaust its heart on mere points of difference and distinction; and if we would take our place among the victors in the great battle for God and truth, we must respond to our mission in the defense and proclamation of a common faith; we must do what we can first and most to induce souls to grasp and repose upon fundamental truth, and leave all mere specialties and boasted distinctions for afterthought.

The article in the church paper, the book in whose every line and on whose every page men may see the face and hear the voice of Christ, that turns man's heart and thought to God as he has come to us in the bloody agony of Gethsemane and Calvary, until

he reaches out faith's trembling hand toward the holy reality, has done infinitely more than the massive folios that attain their end when they have made a partisan or an ecclesiastic.

It is astonishing how the silent voice of the press can speak to the human heart and conscience, and the man who wields the agent does not know his power.

The congregations of the editor and the author far out-number those we preach to, and when truth is the temper, soul and object of what is written, who can estimate the good? And is it true that the secular press sometimes rebukes us in the utterance of pertinent and telling words?

Dr. Craig, in the paper from which I have already quoted, said: "The strongest single blow we have seen given to Ingersollism was given by a Chicago daily."

That is noble testimony in behalf of the secular press; it shows what an irresistible power it may wield for good; but especially does it not put emphasis upon the function and potency of the Christian press, from which the world has best right to look for the strongest blows against error and in defence of the truth? There is a solemn demand made now upon the religious press to establish the minds of men in the belief of a God, in the great facts of redemption, of personal responsibility and eternal destiny; and, while our own periodical press and Publication Society have a special mission, which we have no thought of under-estimating, it is no less their sublime opportunity and function to enter upon this wider domain, and thus will every stream be fed that flows by our own threshold, and refreshes our own life. We should strive for an ample Lutheran literature; but not a literature treating of nothing but denominational ideas and distinctions, but a literature of Lutheran origin. It will help us amazingly to write and print for all readers. Let us show that the noblest humanity and manhood can be produced, and that the highest order of culture, the social, æsthetic and intellectual, as well as spiritual, is consistent with, and is the legitimate outcome of our Lutheran system properly developed.

There is such a thing as a particular church being felt, despite any prejudice or misrepresentation with which it may be called to contend. I know of no way more efficient, of few as effective, as by its thought. Let it set about to produce a literature that will chal-

lenge the thought and meet the wants of men, that will help them to live and die, and the name of that church will be emblazoned everywhere, and her altars will be sought by weary multitudes. There is great need that authorship be stimulated among us; there is need that we grow a generation of authors; there is great need that the reading faculty, in which as a church we are blushingly deficient, be developed; and one way to accomplish this end will be to produce something in our common tongue, and adapted to the present want, for the people to read. Books will be bought when there are more of them written by the living generation, and when the temptation of purchasing them is thrust upon the people. Let them be true to the Gospel, and then they will be true to humanity; let them be free from domination and narrowness, let them bubble with sweetness and freshness as a mountain spring, let them glow with love, and light up with simple truth, bringing balm and help to all the relations of life, and not gloomy with men's prejudices, and there cannot be too many of them. The more angels of the right sort that are set flying, the better; they will be as the flaming torches of the heavens flashing through the rift of the clouds, or as the song pealing from the sky at night announcing the world's better birth.

Who can tell where the books of the humblest author may go, or by what strange providence they may be commended, or what lone heart in any part of the world may be lightened and renewed by the silent whisper of truth they utter?

What can multiply and immortalize human effort like the press? The question, "Which is mightier—the pen or the sword?" and upon which we all have spent our youthful eloquence, is no longer debatable. History has decided it, Christianity has decided it, and now and forever, for the pen and against the sword. Luther's pen has made wider and deeper tracings on the world's history than the sceptre of Charlemagne or the sword of Napoleon.

Says Channing: "God be thanked for books! They are the voices of the distant and dead, and make us heirs of the spiritual life of past ages. Books are the true travelers. They give to all who will faithfully use them the society, the spiritual presence, of the best and greatest of our race."

Then, if we would have our own thoughts awakened, we must read. Books, says the poet,

“ Are strange things, and a drop of ink,
Falling like dew upon a precious thought,
Produces that which makes thousands, perhaps
Millions, think.”

Ah, my brethren, as I observe how we have isolated the press power of the Church, in her papers, her writings, and in that Society established to scatter far and wide her noble heritage of living truth, from the other interests and institutions of the Church, I fear we have a very limited apprehension, and perhaps appreciation, of the mighty power within our reach. True, indeed, there has been gratifying progress within the recent years; but is it not chiefly due to local effort, and to the very commendable efficiency of the present management? The issues of the Board, both for the Sunday-school and for the church, have been greatly increased; but after all, what are these among so many? We should not despise the day of small things, but the type that prints that respecting our Board should have been tossed into “pi” long ago, and we should blush that we have been compelled to stereotype it. The interest in this Board and in all the press power of the Church must become as general as is the need, and as hearty as the opportunity is great.

The world will read what we write when it cannot listen to what we say. If we are wise, if we would think to approach the ideal we have set up and the predictions we have ventured respecting the great Church of the Reformation, we must use the press more. Through the press our thought must flash, and our hearts must throb, and our mission must announce its march upon the world; and then we shall have put in motion a train of forces that will help to unify us, and that will lift the Church into that mastery of power and influence of which she is both worthy and capable. There is no means by which a man may so magnify and immortalize his influence, as by the printed sheet or page.

Prof. Long, in addressing the Baptist Publication Society a few years ago, said: “I would barter all the influence I have ever had, and all that I may ever have in this world, for that of ‘Jesus, Lover of my Soul,’ or ‘Rock of Ages, cleft for me.’ There is many a book that is worth more than a thousand ordinary men. It is better to write a good book than to win a great battle. Indeed, the noisy contest of the battle-field is often but the culmination of the strife

that has first raged in books. Standing with a friend in a great public library, I pointed him to the well-worn works of Daniel Webster. In reply he silently pointed to the equally well-worn works of Calhoun. No remark was necessary. We felt that the history of the 'irrepressible conflict' was before us, and that Bull Run and Gettysburg had been fought in books long before they were fought in Virginia and Pennsylvania. The smoke of the actual battles has passed away, and peace reigns over fields made memorable by the shock of arms; but the war of opinion goes on in the books, and in years to come may yet again convulse the nation. Webster and Calhoun nominally dead, but really living and speaking through the press, are still leaders of men."

The same is true of those who have written in the interests of Christ's kingdom. In the sixteenth century Europe was sluggish—the great mass was waiting to be stirred.

"Then Luther rose; and Liberty and Light
Unbarred the soul, and let salvation in."

But it was not Luther's voice so much as the tract, the sermon, the commentary, and, above all, the German Bible he gave to the people. "The Reformation was the work, not of the Reformers alone, but of the Reformers and the printing press; and without the latter we might still be in bondage to Rome."

And, now, shall we be blind to our opportunity in this agency, and set it off as if we could be independent of it, and so suffer it to go alone? Just as well might a man fall out with the air he breathes, and expect to live, as may the Church in such a course expect to win. Do we say that the Publication Society and our periodical press challenge and need the sympathy and help of the Church? With a profounder significance may we not say, the Church needs and cannot dispense with this agency?

Every throb of our Christian press is a throb of fresh life swept back to the heart of the Church, and then carried to every part of her living body; and when I stand here to speak in behalf of this interest, I am speaking for our mission Boards, for our colleges and seminaries, for our benevolence, for our greater unity, for our special enlightenment and culture, for our place and power in the march of the best civilization, and for our mighty mission as God voices it out in the sublime commission, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature."

But this must suffice for general remark. I come now to speak more specifically of our Church press as an *educating agency*.

The press has no higher function than that of an educator. Its beams of light penetrate every nook and corner of the globe, and by the revelation it makes responds to the unlimited desire to know. It is alike the promulgator and the defender of systems of faith; and then it comes along, and by all its varied tone and abundant information, it instructs and aids the adherents of the cause it has announced, expounded, or defended, in the execution of its mission. There is no estimating the power of the press in this regard. It has an endowment as a quickener of thought, and as a creator of character and life, that is peculiar to itself.

But this is not all. I should read to increase my usefulness. Dr. Franklin wrote: "When I was a boy, I met with a book entitled, 'Essays to Do Good.' It had been so little regarded by its former possessor that several leaves were torn out, but the remainder gave me such a turn of thinking as to have an influence on my conduct through life; for I always set a greater value on the character of a doer of good than any other kind of reputation; and if I have been a useful citizen, the public owes the advantage of it to that book."

A wicked man bought a copy of one of the pious Flavel's works, and was so convinced of the truths set forth that he bought a hundred copies for distribution among his friends.

A single book has more than once revolutionized a nation, and so exalted one single virtue in the minds of men, so quickened thought in a given direction, and so charged communities with the justness of a principle, that the most ingenious and violent efforts have failed to stem the tide and reverse its flow. By this very process, the printed and wide-spread illustration of conflicting principles in the social, civil, and religious world, God has ripened the world into such a sense of liberty and justice as men scarce dreamed of once. A bad book teaches bad lessons, but, after all, that culture is superficial; men simply acquiesce in reading a bad book, and, the thought and aim of it being indefensible, its faculty must be superficial; but there is something in a good book, when it has secured the reader's confidence, that takes hold of the very fibre of the soul, and enlarges all its faculties. It is no ordinary advantage that there is such a disposition among the people to

avail themselves of this method of education. This is an age of the press, and, whether we read little or much, this is a reading age, and the denomination that gives the most light will be best known, and most felt. The people will read, they will investigate, they thirst for light; and you can no more stay this craving for knowledge than you could stay Niagara's rush with your two palms. And it is well, it is not necessarily a false craving, no evil omen, when men ask for light, and when they apprehend the sovereignty that is in them, and choose to think for themselves.

It is in the order of human progress, and now it is the mission of the Church, to meet this overture with a response that will disarm prejudice, confound error, and leave men standing amid the clear effulgence of truth—truth unbound and free, truth that fears no scrutiny, and shrinks from no fair test. And the Church in her distinct bodies should assume a wide scope in this matter of education through the press. How it would add to our influence and success if by all right means, we should aim to put the impress of our own image far more than we have upon general literature. We hold to great truths that throb in the best progress of every relation of life, and I confess to a desire that of set purpose we apply the principles we maintain everywhere. It is said that our mission is quite exclusively to the poor. That is a high and holy mission; it was one of the crowning glories of Christ's character and work that he preached the Gospel to the poor; but he has given us the world for our field, and we should aim to throw the light on the retreating surges of darkness everywhere. Who of us has helped the world to know how much it is indebted in all the varied phases of life, not to art and science, philosophy and invention, but to the great Reformation with which we stand so honorably associated. Men talk of liberty to-day: every breeze carries the shout of its conquest, and all peoples hail its jubilee. Men talk of civilization: every nation throbs with its renewed life, and all lands are fragrant with its marvelous blossoming. But I am not presumptuous when I ask, How will you separate the name of Luther from either of these forces?

The great principles for which Luther struck, when his hammer fell on the church-door in Wittenberg, have culminated in the liberty and civilization we enjoy to day. Dr. Schaff, in his *History of Creeds*, says: "The inalienable rights of an American citizen

are nothing but the Protestant idea of the general priesthood of believers, applied to the civil sphere or developed into the corresponding idea of the general kingship of freemen." Luther, in the Reformation, struck for the freedom of every slave, whether of the conscience, mind, or body, and raised aloft but one infallible guide and limit for every function of man, and that was the Bible. Whatever part we may justly claim in this mighty achievement, and in what has come of it, let us make it known, not with narrowness and prejudice, but in the spirit born of it. We have suffered as a church from misrepresentation and prejudice, and I think we deserve a good share of it. We have resented these things. We shall do vastly more to beat them down and to strike them from the thought of mankind, if we say less about them as existing errors and hindrances, and push ourselves forward more in the current thought of the time. By the enunciation and elaboration and application of the thought that is begotten of our principles, let us produce in every noble sphere of life that which to all thinking minds shall be ample contradiction of all misrepresentations and prejudices, and when the grand old tree thus comes to be judged more by the fruit, neither the opinions of the bigot nor the prejudices of the ignorant need cause us any concern. I bespeak for the Lutheran Church the place that belongs to her in the great moving, moulding forces of the time, in the effort at universal enlightenment. She does not want for scholars and authors; she is not dull to apprehend the relation of her own system, and the testimony of her own history, to all the best interests of society, to government, and to the highest and widest culture. Let her speak, let her write, let her print, and regardless of distinction, summon the learned and illiterate alike to her vast sources of knowledge.

But the press of our church has a special mission to perform as an educational agency. We must educate our own, and in our own way. What a work our Publication Society, our church papers, and our quarterly, have in this mission! You observe I combine all these agencies, for though they are separate in their management, they all belong to the same arm of service, and, in much part, have the same ends in view.

The church sustains the same relation to her members in the matter of education that the parent does to the children. When a soul is converted and adopted into the Christian household, it has

scarce mastered the alphabet of the spiritual kingdom, while the great volume of Christian duty, Christian experience, and Christian relationship, yet remains unread. What hosts of noble souls we have, but who are uneducated, and hence comparatively helpless in all the aggressive movements of the church. They are not familiar with her teaching, with her history and its lessons, with her methods and her institutions; and how could they be interested in her mission and the attainment of it? It is a mistake to suppose that when men and women become Christians they will just develop into proper character and organizing efficiency. I dare to say that the history of the whole church manifests this very serious defect—a want of education. Presbyterianism is largely what it has become, because it is a discipline of doctrine. Methodism belts the world to-day because it is a discipline of practical efficiency. These denominations have excelled us in the general education of the people. We marshal a host, but am I wrong when I say that vast numbers of them are undisciplined? To educate our people, to equip them, to drill them, to teach them to work by wise methods in skilled hands, is just as much a duty as to evangelize others. Beginning with the children, this culture must be carried on to the end, and it must comprehend all that is included in intelligent belief, in hearty co-operation, and skillful work.

I do not mean to intimate that in the education of the people we are only to think of methods of work, or a mere routine of doing. The kingdom of God is more than a training school, and the church has a higher mission than simply to make men and women of method and tact. Each one brought into the fold must be reared into a living temple. There must be a good foundation laid. Doctrine must be taught. As well attempt to grow a symmetrical tree without soil, as to grow a symmetrical Christian without doctrine.

We must not hesitate to preach and publish doctrine, giving all prominence to that which is fundamental and pre-eminent. It was the great dogma of justification by faith that swallowed up the soul, and challenged the efforts and self-denial of Luther, more than all others combined. He took care of the fountain, and felt that this done, the streams would take care of themselves. He knew much better than many of his followers have sometimes seemed to know, that the life and prosperity of the church were enshrined in

this great central truth, and that by every means it must be maintained in the Church, and published to the world. When I read Luther and of his great work, the sublime distinction, the pre-eminent doctrine, which he lifts before me constantly, blazing in the clear light of truth like a polished shaft, is *justification by faith*.

What matters it that others hold it in common with us? Do we regret that, and on that account shall we ignore it as a distinction of the Church? Do we as a church sustain no peculiar relation to this throbbing heart, this fountain head of evangelical truth, of which all other essential doctrines are as the branches of a tree to the main trunk?

For long years much has been said and written and published on subordinate doctrines; over these we have contended, on these the noblest energies of the Church have been spent, and much good force hopelessly squandered, and still we are more than twain, and if unity can only be had by perfect uniformity of belief on the nature and effects of the ordinances, we are likely to remain apart. The tenth article of the Augsburg Confession will be more fully believed, more faithfully observed, and more ably defended, when a heartier prominence is given to the fourth. Though it be in behalf of another dogma dear to the heart, and identified with the life of the Church, it has always proven perilous to turn the minds of men away from that truth which is central and essential over all.

I raise aloft the great doctrine of Justification by Faith as the chief and grandest distinction of the Lutheran Church; and when I say this, I am only repeating the sublime declaration of Paul, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Give this truth the wings of the press, as well as the voice of the preacher, and we will do more than we have yet done to hasten our unity, to magnify our power, and to improve wisely and well the opportunities placed at our disposal. We shall never save the world, we shall never achieve the mission of the Church, by trying to unite her several parts on an ordinance, or an order of worship; we must aim more than we have to make the doctrine of justification the great distinction of the Church, and then we shall have better health and better hope.

The strong Christian is not the man who can only contend for a form or an ordinance, but the man who, with the ordinance, is

rooted in, and in head and heart knows the doctrine of justification by faith. And when was there a time when there was so much need, and when the press had such an opportunity for the dissemination of this doctrine, which is sure when faithfully presented to blossom and bloom into all other good truth?

In the growth of a perverted liberty, in a false apprehension of the want of the times, in the undue importance given to forms and seasons, in the mania for art and parade in worship, quite a preference has been given to the æsthetical, the sentimental, the material, and doctrine has been quite forgotten. Men have been quite absorbed with the blossoms and the branches of the tree, and have forgotten the soil in which its roots are struck. If we would have a well-educated people, they must be, from childhood on, cultured in the doctrines of the Church, giving each its proper place and promise; but this can never be done by reversing God's own order, and giving pre-eminence to that to which the pre-eminence does not belong. Unless the people are settled and grounded in the faith, they shall misrepresent and harm us, while they shall themselves become castaway. The Christian tone has never been higher, and the Christian Church has never wrought better, than when the great facts of sin and grace have been urged upon the people, not simply as traits of religion, but as the underlying principles of a divine revelation, which embodies the sum of saving truth. In the Church, in the press of the Church, we must be content with nothing less than the fullest presentation of Christian doctrine, if we would share in the largest triumphs of Christian truth. With such a source to draw from, what a teaching force the press becomes! What an audience it commands! What varied ability it challenges and secures! What wholesome indoctrination must ensue, when the Christian press more generally assumes the lofty task of presenting to the nations, both in the form and in the life, the entire contents of the Christian revelation!

Think what influence it would give us if the religious tract and book bearing the imprint of our own Board, and if our occasional literature, was to be found in every home in which the Church has representation; how familiar it would make all the members with what is going on in the Church, what interest would be awakened, what increased effort would be put forth as her need and her worth and her triumphs came to the knowledge of the people; how hun-

gry souls would be fed, and weary hearts would be comforted, and dull consciences would be quickened, and with such increased intelligence filling head and heart, how the force of the church would be multiplied, the entire body would take on new beauty and power, the work of the minister and the missionary would be rid of embarrassment, and salvation would go forth from our Zion as a lamp that burneth. When intelligent men and women in any church become the best exponents of that church's doctrine, when they are familiar with all her institutions and operations, and can testify intelligently in their behalf, the Church has secured a power that cannot well be resisted. With a properly-trained ministry, and then in turn a properly trained membership, first of all consecrated to God, and then imbued with sound savory doctrine, blossoming constantly into efficient strong life, the beautiful ideal of the Church and of Christ shall be realized in our midst. "The whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, making increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

I would like to speak here upon the power and function of the press in local work, the use of the church paper, of the tracts and books bearing the imprint of our own Board, but for the time I must forbear.

I may say that the minister who is indifferent to the circulation of his church's papers and literature, will always have an ignorant and indifferent congregation, and he deserves to have it.

And I am quite sure that the experience of many will respond to my own, when I say that the most effectual way to give circulation to our publications of all kinds, is not only to recommend, but to show them. In the absence of the appointed colporteur, we must assume the office ourselves. Twenty thousand copies of our church papers distributed among those who do not read them, only for the space of two months, will add 10,000 names to the list of subscribers, and the investment will pay a hundred-fold. The same is true of the tracts and books of the Society. They must be brought to the attention of the people, and then, in hundreds of instances, they will be purchased and read. Has not the time come when not a single home in the church, not a single member, should be without the church paper, and when authorship and the reading faculty

should be stimulated by the wider circulation of pamphlet, tract and volume? Only thus shall the church be educated as she needs to be, and shall we be ever able to respond to the ordination of God, which is that truth shall be spread and witnessed to not only by the "*tongue of the learned*," but also by "*the pen of the ready writer*."

Bear with me while I yet speak briefly of *the function and power of the press as an evangelizing agency*.

Evangelization! It is suggestive alike of one of the sublimest facts and greatest opportunities of the age. There is no room to-day for any Church that is not, as a pre-eminent, all-absorbing purpose, endeavoring to save the world. It is an evidence that the kingdom of God is coming with power, when a Church fired with the love and purpose of the Gospel addresses herself with unremitting, intelligent zeal to the evangelization of the world. There is no more promising omen in Christian work to-day than the fact that in our own beloved Church and in the whole world the conviction is becoming more intense that men are to be saved, that they are to be lifted up and set in higher ways of living and thinking, and moulded into the power and beauty and sublime order of the Gospel. More than ever there is a growing sense that the time is short, that the morning of rare opportunity has come, and that now our holy faith does not so much need defending, as the weary world needs saving; in other words, that there can be no defence of it so unanswerable as the effective response it makes to Christian evangelization. The truth and value of creeds and symbols can never be determined by controversy, but by what they can do towards saving mankind. It is well to be familiar with the standards of the Church; it is wise now and again to instruct the people in them, not that they may be made partisans, but that they may be caught up and infused with the spirit and power of the truth; but unless all this effort is practically applied, unless there is that in it which of set purpose looks to the practical result the Gospel contemplates, it is time and labor lost. Faith without works is dead. All discussion of and controversy over creeds and symbols that does not develop into the enlargement and practical application of the evangelistic spirit and purpose, is of little worth, and may work actual harm. Let us write anything, let us discuss anything, let us publish anything, that

will give prompt and hearty response to our Lord's commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."

It is time that as a Church we come to solid and restful ground as to what we believe in doctrine, and as to what is a wise polity, and address ourselves with all might to the blessed and needy work of evangelization. We have the Gospel—we have it in our creed; let us be most anxious to apply it to the sore heart of a lost world. The shape of the box, the material of which it was made, or whose were the hands that cut upon it such beautiful tracery, did not concern Mary when the tribute of her love was challenged, she broke it on her Lord, that he might be honored, and the world blessed with its fragrance. So let us do with the grand symbol of our faith in earnest, holy life. in enlarged missionary work let us bring it to the feet of Jesus and the salvation of men. Too long have we been treating the everlasting truth as if it could not survive unless we stood about its citadel with drawn weapons. I would rather my confession of faith should be proven true by its achievement of the principles of the Gospel in the lives and hearts of men, than by all the learned dissertations in the world. When God has helped me to save a man, I have been most successful in winning an adherent to my confession of faith. The Master had no patience, and we should not have, with those who have no higher mission than to seek a sign.

Nor let us longer think that our mission is limited, and that in our evangelistic work we are only to be concerned about one or two nations. I want to see the Church of the Reformation become national and international; let her great strong arms belt the world. Has any church a better right? Ireland as well as Germany; China and Japan as well as Russia and Sweden and Denmark—is not the obligation on us to give the Gospel to all? Look away to Wittenberg and Augsburg if you will; but is it not time we stop walking backward toward the rocky peaks and the golden gate? See how, from all parts of the world the nations seem to be pouring upon us like a flood. The General Synod, within its own limits, has the world within its grasp. We are not in this matter of evangelization to know any man after the color of his skin, the accent of his speech, the shape of his head, or the cut of his hair. I break down all barriers, and respond to what seems to

me the clear message of God's providence, when I say, "Go out and labor, and pray, and preach, and print, and circulate, for the evangelization of the world." Think of the world west of the Mississippi, how inviting, and with what anxiety it waits!

Nearly fifty years ago De Tocqueville said, "The grandest part of all this grand country is the great central Mississippi valley. The Valley of the Mississippi is, upon the whole, the most magnificent place on earth prepared by God for man's abode." Later, Bayard Taylor said, "There is no other so large country on earth so fertile as this great central American valley. What a tide of humanity has, and, with a mightier flow than ever, still flows into this vast domain." And from farm and hamlet, from city and village, from home and school, and office and mart and commercial exchange, from all the rush and roar of battling forces, what is the voice that comes to the Church of Christ, to the Lutheran Church—what the grandest and noblest opportunity this surging mass offers? I utter it in one thrilling word, *evangelize!*—*evangelize!*

But what is the relation of the press to all this? Very vital and very intimate, I remark. The comparative absence of the press as a stimulant and helper is the weak point in our evangelistic work, especially in the new world of the West. The forerunner and companion of the missionary in the most aggressive denominations in this land is the colporteur. This important factor is now supplied in a limited way by the *Missionary Journal*; but that is too occasional, and is not, and cannot be, sufficiently elaborate. The truth is, my brethren, I can hardly say that our Publication Society, most encouraging strides as it has made the last few years, has yet assumed its great function as an essential aid to our work of evangelization. We have not yet a single colporteur in the field, nor have we yet sufficient supplies for such agents, nor is the Church quite yet prepared to give the encouragement needed for their adequate support. How much we lose by the absence of this agency we can in some measure determine by observing how immensely others gain by having it. This work of commending and distributing the literature of the Church will never be successfully done without earnest, orderly effort. You may multiply the publications of the Church, but earnest effort at distribution must follow, or of what avail? The merchant makes greater effort to dispose of his wares than to procure them. It is good to publish, but it is still

better to circulate. I believe we have somewhat to be delighted over and grateful for in the recent success of the Board; but we should have had it long ago, and now our anniversaries should not furnish an occasion to tell when this Board was founded and for what, but rather to recount its triumphs as an indispensable auxiliary to the missionary and other institutions of the Church. We shall be proud to see the shelves of the Board filled with the books of Lutheran authors; but it will be no credit to them, and no help to the Church, to have them remain there. Somehow they must be announced, and scattered far and wide, especially among the more destitute portions of the Church. Give the missionary this arm of service, and he will not be long humiliated by questions that reveal an almost entire ignorance of the Church he represents. I do not speak unadvisedly when I say that the throbbing pulse of the vast missionary operations of the great missionary denominations is their Publication Societies. Go into the fast-populating Territories and States of the West, and you will find the numerous issues of their printing presses scattered everywhere, and when the missionary comes he is not a stranger, still less a curiosity; already before his advancing step there is an open door, and he goes in to possess the land, and the denomination that ignores this method must work at a disadvantage that will weaken, if not quite paralyze the best man's efforts. The evangelistic spirit must mingle with all we write, and these leaves must be scattered without stint— for pay when pay can be secured, without it when pay is impossible.

The infidel world understands the power of the press in its dark and unusually triumphant march through this world. Infidelity is organized to scatter the blighted leaves of its godless system. The missionary on the frontier, and the minister in the great city, finds them everywhere. They scatter them by the million, and free. There is no tax but the tax of reading. And shall we, who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ, refuse to spread a better board? Not if we would reap a better harvest. Not if we understand our duty and apprehend our opportunity. Not if we would successfully plant the standard of our Church, and build up her waste places in every part of this great nation. Not if we would be true to the resources committed to us, and to the obligation imposed upon us. The best response to unkind and untruthful criticism on the Bible, is circulation; and so, the best way to

establish and give power to the Church of the Reformation, is to make known her claims, to publish and spread her principles, which have been as a living seed and a preserving salt in all the ages. To tell whence we come, out of what mighty battles—to tell what we are, and what we come to do, and in whose name we propose to lift up our banners—is to offer a warrant, and insure us success, in the great work of evangelism.

But how shall we accomplish all this without the press? Others as wise as we, and with claims as just, have failed without the press, and so shall we. We must come to a better apprehension of this arm of service. We must come to think of it as allied and essential to the development of benevolence, to the cultivation of an intelligent zeal, to the maintenance of an indispensable interest, and to the furtherance of every claim of the Church. Long enough have we given this Society a subordinate, if not an indifferent place. I am frank to say that, judiciously and universally used, there is not an institution in the Church that shrines within itself the possibilities of power this Board does. Especially in our great work of evangelization we must magnify it more and more. What it has done is but a tiny rill compared with the fresh, pure streams of living water that should be rushing from its fountain-head into all parts of the Church. This tiny stream is to be swollen, let us hope, by a mighty flood. God speed the time when it shall be as the prophet's vision—up to the ankles—up to the loins—a great sea, which no man can cross. Let our ministers and people come to the heartiest support of our Publication Society, of our quarterly and weekly papers, of all our press power; let the Church lay her hands upon these in pushing forward all her interests, and in building up the kingdom of Christ, and the results will soon confirm the importance and power of the agency, and what was said twenty-five years ago by another of his own Society, will be true of ours—“Then would this Society, the property and pride of our whole denomination, rise to its true position—central and conspicuous—like the Angel of the Apocalypse, with his face as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire, with one foot upon the land and the other upon the sea, and *with an open book in his hand.*”